

# Catholics and Social Reform

THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

THE times through which we are passing are fraught with anxiety of every kind. It is not necessary to gaze upon the conflict of nations which afflicts the world to find matter of serious concern. At home, in our own midst there are signs of trouble and disturbance, only very partially revealed in the public press, but well known to those in authority, which portend the possibility of grave social upheaval in the future.

It is admitted on all hands that a new order of things, new social conditions, new relations between the different sections into which society is divided, will arise as a consequence of the destruction of the formerly existing situation. In this transformation, which will be for better or worse, the Catholic Church has her own special duty to perform, and her own part to play. What is that part to be in our own nation, and in the Empire?

Before we answer this momentous question it is important that we should understand how the present conflict has arisen, and endeavor to trace its causes, summarily at least, far beyond the events of the summer of 1914.

We may in this summary consider first the principles which in the main governed the various classes of this nation, and of other Christian nations, in their dealings with one another, prior to the religious disruption of the sixteenth century. Men then, as now, desired to make their way in life; they entered into competition with one another; they were prone, then as now, to yield to temptation, to overreach or to deal unfairly with their fellows. But the good and well-disposed had a guide, the self-seeking found a check, in the accepted princi-

ples that environed them. Competition in trade or industry, perfectly legitimate in itself, had yet so to be co-ordinated that the right of the individual worker to a true human existence should not be made dependent upon the unrestricted gain of him for whom he toiled, nor the interests of the community sacrificed to the aggrandizement of the successful individual. And before the minds of all—peasant, laborer, manual worker, tradesman, landowner, professional man, titled peer of the realm, and Sovereign of the Kingdom—there was ever present the certainty of a complete account to be one day rendered to a Just Judge, the Maker of rich and poor alike.

#### ENGLAND'S INSTINCTIVE CHRISTIANITY.

These principles of Christianity have remained deeply imbedded in the mind and heart of the English people. They have influenced for a long space, and still influence to some extent, instinctively rather than consciously, the legislation of this country. But with the gradual disappearance of the authority which alone could enforce and give sanction to them, those who still follow these principles very often do not know why they do so, neither can they give an answer should their validity be challenged.

Thus gradually and almost imperceptibly a new relation of society came into being; and men and women, of high aim and of avowedly Christian belief, came to be dominated by ideas which had no ground in, or dependence upon, any Christian principle. Those who have studied the matter in detail have told us at length of the terrible conditions existing in this country less than a hundred years ago, in which conditions all thought of the rights of each individual soul or of the community as a whole was obliterated, and men felt no qualms about the practical enslavement and degrading impoverishment of multitudes in order that a few might possess and command the resources of almost unrestricted wealth. Desire of gain at all cost, without reference to the consequences thereby entailed upon vast numbers of the nation, became a ruling principle. The true end and pur-

pose of existence were forgotten; the right of the individual received little thought; the interests of the community were sacrificed to the exaggerated well-being of the few. Wealth and material prosperity to be obtained by those who were able to attain them were a sufficient object for this life. In too many cases any higher aim was deliberately excluded or regarded as so problematical as to be undeserving of serious thought. An enormous development of trade took place. On the surface there was prosperity which seemed to admit of no limit or setback, and our teachers of even only forty years ago told us complacently that the economic system and development of England were of a very perfect kind, and worthy of imitation by less enlightened and less progressive nations.

#### A LESSON FROM THE ENEMY.

Other nations had been learning the lesson—notably the confederation of nations which is now our chief enemy. With the thoroughness of purpose and scientific determination that characterize her, Germany has sought a world-wide predominance by setting boldly and consistently before herself those materialistic aims which for too long deluded and misled our English people. She desires "her place in the sun"; and, as might was only too often right in the industrial struggles within the limits of our own people, so imbued with the same principles, happily to an increasing extent now discarded among us, she claims that might is right in the world domination for which she is now struggling to her doom.

Happily, do we say, are those false principles being discarded among us; for, were it not so, the future of our peoples would be as overcast as is the future which the economic lusts of our enemies are bringing rapidly upon them.

The last thirty years have shown a surprising return to saner doctrines and sounder principles in the teachings of our economists, and in the practice of our people, a return all the more astonishing because it has been instinctive rather than logical, and has little definite rela-

tion to religious teaching. God has watched over us in this respect, in spite of all our national sins and shortcomings, as He has so often done in the history of the past. Youthful ardor, self-sacrifice in face of common danger, recognition of the rights of all who do their part in the nation's struggles, no less than the compelling necessity of the moment, have led the peoples of the Empire to an abandonment of materialistic aims, and to a giving up of desires based purely on the present life, which would have seemed incredible not so many years ago.

#### AFTER THE WAR—WHAT?

But in every mind the cry is insistent. "The war will one day end. What then? What is the future of our country to be? Are all our sacrifices to go for nothing? Is our world to be a truer, a better, a happier place than it was before?" We proclaim loudly that we are now fighting not so much against the German people as against the principles which have impelled them to wage an unjustifiable war. We have to be on our guard lest those same principles, the desire of power and gain at the cost of the moral law, should reassert their sway in our own national and social life. Such desire once led us into practices at which the conscience of the nation now revolts. That reawakened conscience has been strengthened by the dread happenings of this war; and to some extent—though, alas! not wholly—these evil principles have been exorcized.

In making these comments on the order of things which too long prevailed in England, it is in no way necessary, nor would it be right, to impute conscious injustice to those who upheld and perpetuated the wrongs that all now regretfully recognize. Just as there must be countless numbers in Germany today who would condemn with the same execration as we do the crimes of which their rulers are guilty, could they only gaze upon them from the same point of view from which we contemplate them, so, when a false social and political economy still held unrestrained sway in England, many God-fearing and honorable men were the unwitting ac-

complices of a system which had blinded and mastered them.

It is not, then, in any spirit of censure, either of master or servant, or of capitalist or workmen, of employer or trades unionist—not with any desire to blame either the past or the present—but solely to prepare for and safeguard the future, that we venture to approach the problem that we are placing before you today.

What is that future to be—how is the social and political order to be reconstructed among us? There are some, a small minority as yet, but with increasing influence, who are proclaiming a policy of despair. They have looked, they will tell us, in various directions for a solution of the problem in vain. Those who in this country are the official representatives of religious teaching have failed—so these despairing voices assure us—to give any coherent answer to their questions. Thus they are compelled—again it is their voice that speaks—to the unwelcome conclusion that the existing relations of society are capable of being remedied, and that things cannot be worse than they are at the present time. Let then, they proclaim, the existing order be overthrown and destroyed in the hope baseless or well-founded, that out of the chaos and destruction some better arrangement of men's lives may grow up. It is the policy of which we see the realization and the first-fruits at the present time in Russia.

The vast majority of our people are held back, if not by religious motives, at least by their inborn practical sense, from suicidal projects of this kind. In this turmoil of uncertainty, in this longing for teaching and guidance, what is the place of those to whom God has given, and who have accepted, the fulness of the Divine Revelation under the authority of the Church of Jesus Christ? Will their voice be heard if, amid the clamor, it be upraised. If they be heard, have they a real message to deliver?

#### THE BETTER WAY.

There can, we think, be no doubt at all as to the readi-

ness of our countrymen to listen to the teachings of the Catholic Church if an opportunity can be given to them of knowing what that teaching is. Their attitude towards the Church is rapidly ceasing to be one of indifference. Widespread interest is shown in our doctrines and practices, especially in all that we may say about the grave dangers that now threaten the world.

The very circumstances, too, of the war have brought hundreds of thousands of Englishmen into new and closer contact with the Catholic Church. British soldiers in Belgium and France have been profoundly affected by all that they have seen of her influence in those countries.

They are impressed with a new sense of the reality of religion. They observe its effectiveness in the face of danger and death; its power to heal, tranquilize and uplift; the definiteness and uniformity of Catholic teaching. In England, too, many have adopted Catholic emblems, beliefs, and practices which before the war would probably have repelled them. The message of war-shrines, crucifixes, and rosaries finds an echo in the heart of the people, a stirring, it may be, of the old Catholic tradition, never wholly obliterated. Belief in the efficacy of prayers for the dead is becoming more frequent; and it is dawning upon many that their choice must be between the religion of Catholics and no religion at all.

Again, social reformers of every school are turning more and more to Catholic tradition for their inspiration; and even in the aspirations and demands of extremists we may often discern that belief in the value of human personality, that insistence upon human rights, that sense of human brotherhood, and that enthusiasm for liberty which are marked features of Catholic social doctrine.

Another cause has been at work to remove the prejudices of former days. During the war Catholics, many of them suffering hitherto from a certain shyness and isolation, have been brought into intimate contact with the rest of the nation. The shouldering of common bur-

dens, daily association with others in the manifold works of relief and organization, comradeship in the army, and cordial co-operation at home, have conduced to mutual respect and dissipated the old atmosphere of suspicion.

#### RELUCTANT EVIDENCE.

It was, perhaps, inevitable that this growing sympathy with Catholic ideals should have irritated that small but noisy section of fanatics who are always ready to play upon the fears of the credulous or to re-echo those "No Popery" cries which we, in common with all men of right feeling, would very readily forget. At a moment when national unity is of vital importance, these people are seeking to stir up popular resentment against a loyal section of the population, regardless not only of justice and charity, but of the effect which such bigotry cannot fail to have upon the Catholics of other nations whose good-will we desire to retain.

With such calumniators as these, appeals to reason and justice appear to be unavailing. But they and the press which represents them are, we think, discredited by the bulk of the nation, to whose sense of fair-play we confidently appeal. And indeed we only refer here to the anti-Catholic agitation because it is an indirect evidence of that growing popular sympathy with Catholic ideals which has, by reaction, stirred it to life.

Our concern, at the moment, is not with exclusively Catholic interests, but with those common problems of national importance which have recently become so acute. It is a moment when all Catholics should reflect very seriously upon their duties as citizens and upon that special contribution to the common welfare which they are enabled to make as representatives of an age-long and world-wide tradition. The Catholic Church has helped to bring social order out of chaos in times past; many of our countrymen feel that her help is much to be desired in the coming reconstruction. They recognize, for instance, that she is able to combine social stability with liberty, and thus to avoid the calamities both

of anarchy and tyranny, into one or the other of which this country might easily drift.

It is well for us to recall that the present social dislocation has arisen precisely because the teaching of the Catholic Church had been forgotten. In the sixteenth century England broke away from the religious unity of Europe. The popular faith was violently ousted, and the spiritual authority of the Pope rejected. In course of time religious individualism gave place to religious indifference, and the twentieth century found the bulk of the people in this land frankly uninterested in church or chapel.

But the old Catholic social ideals and practices had also vanished; and here, too, a fierce individualism produced disastrous consequences. England came under the dominion of a capitalistic and oligarchic régime, which would have been unthinkable had Catholic ideals prevailed, and against which the working classes are now in undisguised revolt.

Capitalism began really with the robbery of church property in the sixteenth century, which threw the economic and social advantage into the hands of the land-owning and trading classes. The industrial revolution in the eighteenth century found England already in the hands of the well-to-do classes. Since then the effect of competition uncontrolled by morals has been to segregate more and more the capitalist from the wage-earning classes, and to form the latter into a "proletariat," a people owning nothing but their labor-power and tending to shrink more and more from the responsibilities of both ownership and freedom. Hence the increasing lack of self-reliance and the tendency to look to the State for the performance of the ordinary family duties.

#### OLIGARCHY AND INDUSTRIALISM.

The English oligarchic spirit took its rise from the same sources as English capitalism, and by the beginning of the twentieth century was closely bound up and dependent on it. The territorial oligarchy had by then thoroughly fused with the commercial magnates, and



the fusion had produced plutocracy. While the Constitution had increasingly taken on democratic forms, the reality underlying those forms had been increasingly plutocratic. Legislation under the guise of "social reform" tended to mark off all wage-earners as a definitely servile class. The result, even before the war, was a feeling among the workers of irritation and resentment, which manifested itself in sporadic strikes, but found no very clear expression in any other way.

During the war the minds of the people have been profoundly altered. Dull acquiescence in social injustice has given way to active discontent. The very foundations of political and social life, of our economic system, of morals and religion, are being sharply scrutinized; and this not only by a few writers and speakers, but by a very large number of people in every class of life, especially among the workers. Our institutions, it is felt, must justify themselves at the bar of reason; they can no longer be taken for granted.

The army, for instance, is not only fighting, it is also thinking. Our men have gained immensely in self-respect, in personal discipline, in a wider comprehension of national and social issues. They have met and made friends with members of other classes and occupations. Many for the first time in their lives have been properly fed and clothed, have learnt the pleasure and health that come from an out-door life, have realized what it means to belong to a body with great traditions. They have learnt the characteristic army scorn for the self-seeking politician and empty talker; they have learnt the wide difference between the facts as they have seen them and as the daily press reports them; and they have learnt to be suspicious of official utterances and bureaucratic ways. Above all, they have faced together hardship, pain and death; and the horror of their experience has forced them back to forgotten religious instincts. And the general effect of all this on the young men who are the citizens of "after the war" is little short of revolutionary.

A similar change has taken place in the minds of our people at home. The munition-workers, hard working

but overstrained by long hours and heavy work, alternately flattered and censured, subjected sometimes to irritating mismanagement, and anxious about the future, tend to be resentful and suspicious of public authorities and political leaders. They, too, are questioning the whole system of society. The voluntary war-workers, again, have had their experience widened; not only are many of them doing useful work for the first time in their lives, and doing it well, but they are working in companionship with and sometimes under the direction of those with whom they would not, in normal times, have dreamt of associating. They are readjusting their views on social questions.

There is, in short, a general change and ferment in the mind of the nation. Few suppose that after the war the social order will automatically adjust itself. Most realize that we must make a combined and determined effort to right it.

It is here that Catholic guidance, if offered with understanding and sympathy, is likely to commend itself. But this means that Catholics must clear their own minds of prejudice, and must deliver not their own message, but the message of the Catholic Church. If their minds are formed in accord, for instance, with the great Encyclicals of Leo XIII., they will seize the opportunity with courage and with a great trust in the people, and a still greater trust in God. They will work for social stability and liberty, for justice and charity, and help to draw together in national unity the sundered and embittered classes.

#### CATHOLIC SOCIAL REFORM.

The Catholic principles of social reform cannot fail to commend themselves to the millions of men and women in this country, in whom a passion for social righteousness has been stirred: who, in the shock of war, have discovered and have revolted at the social unfairness which has prevailed for so long.

Is it surprising that these people, suddenly awakened to the un-Christian features of our civilization, should

in their zeal for reform and their consciousness of power be tempted to root up the wheat with the tares? If some of them, cut adrift as they have been from Christian influences, are suspicious of all religious, as well as all political, organizations, our task must be, not to denounce them as impious revolutionaries, but to show them that the Catholic Church alone can purify and realize their aspirations. They simply do not know, for instance, that Leo XIII. has denounced in terms as strong as they themselves are likely to use, the greed and self-seeking which have laid upon the working classes "a yoke little better than slavery itself."

Now there are certain leading features of the modern labor unrest which, though their expressions may be crude and exaggerated, we recognize as the true lineaments of the Christian spirit. Its passion for fair treatment and for liberty; its resentment at bureaucratic interferences with family life; its desire for self-realization and opportunities of education; above all, its conviction that persons are of more value than property—these surely give us points of contact and promise a sympathetic welcome to our message.

We have only to show what is involved in these excellent ideals, for which we ourselves have labored and suffered—how there can be no rights without duties, how liberty implies responsibility, how suicidal is class war, how the Commandments of God are not only an obligation but a protection for man.

If we review the main principles of Catholic social teaching we shall observe how many of the utterances of "modern unrest" are merely exaggerated or confused statements of those very principles; and since, as has been truly said, "the Catholic Church is not afraid of enthusiasm," we should not find it hard to put before the most ardent their own ideals, in a more coherent and satisfying form than they could do it for themselves.

If they take their stand upon the dignity of man, whether rich or poor, we can show them how every human being, created by God and redeemed by Christ, has a much greater dignity than they had dreamt of.

If they claim for every human being a right to a share in the fruits of the earth, a right to live a life worthy of man, we endorse that claim with Divine sanctions. If they protest against industrial insecurity and the concentration of capital in a few hands, we point out how they are suffering from the blow aimed at the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. If they have had a hard fight to establish the right of association in trades unions, it was because the Catholic voice had been silenced in the land. If their instinct for education and self-realization has been stirred, it is but the awakening of an instinct developed among the people in Catholic days before our universities and secondary schools were diverted from their original purpose.

When once people come to see that we share their aspirations they will be more ready to listen when we show them what those aspirations involve. They will learn to distrust false prophets and specious theorists. They will understand how might is not right; how society is not a conglomeration of warring atoms, but a brotherhood; how the family, which is the bulwark of liberty, would be injured by the introduction of divorce or the weakening of parental authority; how property has its rights, however much those rights may have been exaggerated; that cordial co-operation among all classes of society is necessary if their ideals are to be realized.

Understanding all these truths as parts of one Christian scheme of life, may we not hope that the people of this country will come to have a new conception of what Christianity means? Finding a guide whom they can trust in the complex social problems of today, will they not examine the claims of the Catholic Church to guide them in those religious perplexities which, under the pressure of war, they are beginning to feel?

#### THE CRISIS FOR CATHOLICS.

If, then, it be true that there are many ears open to receive our voice, should we Catholics remain apathetic at this critical moment? The opportunity may never come again. If we stand aside from the

social movements of the day, they will go forward without us, and our message may never be delivered. Can we face such a responsibility when we remember the fate that might overtake a country which has abjured Christian teachings? Pope Leo XIII. has described it to us in his letter on "The Duties of Christians as Citizens":

"Nations and even vast empires themselves cannot long remain unharmed, since, upon the lapsing of Christian institutions and morality, the main foundation of human society must necessarily be uprooted. Force alone will remain to preserve public tranquility and order; force, however, is very feeble when the bulwark of religion has been removed; and, being more apt to beget slavery than obedience, it bears within itself the germs of ever-increasing troubles. The present century has encountered notable disasters: nor is it clear that some equally terrible are not impending. The very times in which we live are warning us to seek remedies there where alone they are to be found—namely, by re-establishing in the family circle and throughout the whole range of society, the doctrines and practices of the Christian religion. In this lies the sole means of freeing us from the ills now weighing us down."

Catholics who have rallied with such splendid patriotism to the defense of the country will, we are confident labor no less generously to reestablish that country on a Christian basis, to seize the opportunities and avert the dangers of the present social unrest. There is a place for every man and woman in this work. In the words of Leo XIII.:

"Civil society, no less than religion, is imperiled; it is the sacred duty of every right-minded man to be up in defense of both the one and the other." ("The Condition of the Working Classes.")

In earnest prayer, in the frequentation of the Sacraments, and in the example of a good Catholic life we place our chief confidence. But with these we must combine a real understanding both of present social conditions and tendencies, and of the principles which will enable us to deal with them aright.

The experience of the past few years has shown how much may be done by the formation of social study circles among Catholics of all classes. By this method, far more than by attendance at occasional lectures or by desultory reading, the student obtains a real grasp of modern problems and the principles underlying them, and is able to exercise a marked influence on local opinion. Such study circles may well be organized among Catholic women also, who will now have the responsibility of the vote and take a more prominent part in public life. It is too much to expect a busy, overburdened priest to undertake in all cases the entire guidance of such study circles: but the clergy can encourage their formation and be ready to advise when occasion arises.

Again, we have the singularly effective instrument of Catholic social literature. Admirable Catholic text-books and manuals are now available, and every effort should be made to give them as wide a circulation as possible.

#### AMONG CATHOLICS AND NON-CATHOLICS.

Of great importance, too, are those general Catholic organizations, such as the Catholic Federations, the Catholic Young Men's Society, and the Catholic Women's League, which aim at bringing together all Catholics, irrespective of their political views or social circumstances, upon the common platform of Catholic public life. The strengthening of their respective branches would enable us not only to forward Catholic interests and to protect religious liberties, but to set before the country in an effective way those Christian principles by which alone can be secured the orderly welfare of a free people. The work of such associations is intended to be constructive. Their aim is not merely to counteract false principles or to protest against injustice, but to build up, positively, a Christian social order. Hence they should be educative, and their members should fit themselves by assiduous study for the task of enlightening others.

Finally, we should co-operate cordially with the efforts which are being made by various religious bodies to remedy our unchristian social conditions. Without any sacrifice of religious principles, we may welcome the sup-

port of all men of good-will in this great and patriotic task. Already, certain important Christian organizations have been occupied in the endeavor to build up a common platform of social reform. Such efforts certainly deserve all the help, guidance, and co-operation that we can afford them.

Such then is the task, such the aim that we desire to place before you, that you may consider it in God's presence. Never has a greater responsibility been given to the Catholics of these lands than at the present time. We have it in our power to render to our fellow-countrymen, to the nation, to the Empire, services of immense value for the common well-being, no less than for the salvation of innumerable souls.

#### MAN'S TRUE END.

The ultimate end of nation and Empire, as of the individuals that compose them, is to give glory to God, and to promote that glory by aiding and not checking men in the fulfilment of the purpose for which God made them.

So long as the teaching of the Catholic Church embodied the religious sentiments of the English people, this ideal was never deliberately set aside; and the religious edifices that grew up in the midst of a very sparse population, with the charitable and educational purposes which they once sheltered, are an abiding witness to what our forefathers accepted as principles of life and conduct.

Externally and superficially in our social structure, in the Government and Constitution of the Empire, the old order has not wholly disappeared. The recognition of God's part and place in civil ruling is less obliterated than in most other nations. But for nearly 400 years the action of the vivifying spirit that once animated rulers and ruled alike, has grown gradually weaker, and not so long ago seemed doomed to entire failure. God is now again, in His mercy, out of the very horrors of war, showing us how we may retrace our steps and rebuild the commonwealth on the teaching given to all generations for their healing in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, His Son.

We are once more reminded by the voice of the Catholic Church—that we, in our turn, may remind others who, perchance, may never have heard, or hearkened to, that voice—that there is no safety for the individual, or for society, except in the teachings of Christ Our Lord.

#### MAN'S TRUE RIGHTS.

Each man receives from his Creator freedom to attain the end for which he was created. He has a right to a true human life, and to the labor whereby materially, that life may be maintained; and to that labor is due a wage proportionate at least to the maintenance of such true human life. In the same way he is entitled to have and to retain property as his own personal possession, and at the same time it is his duty to render to the society of men in the midst of which he lives, the service and obedience without which all corporate existence would be impossible.

In like manner Christ teaches us the sanctity and inviolability of family life; the diversity of the gifts that man receives, with the consequent inevitable difference in position, learning, acquirements and possessions which has ever characterized, and must always characterize the members of the human race; and the mutual dependence which must exist between all ranks of society if God's purpose is to be fulfilled.

If these things be remembered, if they be accepted as the basis of that rebuilding of our public life and government, then may we look forward with confident hope for the future. If they be forgotten, still more if they be deliberately set aside, greater calamity will come upon us than any war could inflict.

It is a part of your mission, dear Reverend Fathers, to bring these matters clearly and plainly before your flocks, so that they may exercise any influence that they possess in accordance with the social teachings of Christ and of His Church, and be the messengers to others outside the flock of what the Church actually teaches on these vitally important subjects. In accomplishing this



mission much use should be made of the excellent publications of the Catholic Social Guild, which is ever ready to render aid in making known the sound principles which must underline all true social reform.

May Our Divine Master, ever kind and considerate to rich and poor, to the learned and to the simple, and to all who seek Him with single heart, be your Guide and Teacher. May His Holy Mother honored once throughout this realm of England as its Queen by right Divine and by the people's choice, be with us as we learn again the lessons that He alone can teach. May the whole nation take the lesson to heart, so that out of the sorrows and bitterness and tragedy of this time of war a new England may be built up which will give to God all the things that are God's, and to the commonwealth all that both society and the individual may justly claim.

## The Social Revolution

CHARLES PLATER, S.J.

*From the "Catholic Times."*

THE reverend lecturer, in opening, said that though he was announced to speak on "The Social Crisis," he thought a better title might have been "The Social Revolution." In this he did not mean to assert that our [English] people were caught with the spirit of revolutionary anarchy: they were far too sensible for that. At the same time, there was a spirit of unrest abroad, and a widespread determination, not only amongst the citizens at home, but amongst the fighting men also, that the old evil social conditions of pre-war days shall never return; but that our national life must be so ordered that all shall have greater opportunities of self-realization. We must bear in mind that the ultimate issue of national

reconstruction will lie with the principles on which we build. Outside the Catholic Church people were frantically searching for principles which would give the desired result; a society established on the principle of social justice. At present the social revolution was largely a revolution in thought. Whether it would become a "bloody revolution" Catholic action could do much to determine. Herein lay our great opportunity and consequently our great responsibility. We were the heirs of the ages, our teacher, the spiritual mother of the human race, whose knowledge of human nature and human needs is unsurpassed. Our interest, our religion, and our duty called upon us to acquaint our fellow-men with the sure principles of Catholic social policy, which offered the only stable foundation for the rebuilding of our shattered society.

On analysis, we found in this modern labor unrest a passionate desire for social justice and personal liberty; resentment at bureaucratic interference with family life; a cry for better opportunities of education and self-realization; and a firm conviction that man is of more consequence than property. Here was our great opportunity. We must show that these have always been our ideals; that for them the Church has always striven; that in her social principles lay the only hope of their realization. Liberty could only obtain when authority was given its due, but liberty and authority could only be reconciled and made to work in harmony when the Church's teaching on duty and responsibility was freely admitted, and due recognition given to the fact that all authority comes from God. Regarding the family, the social unit of society, the Church had always maintained its autonomy against undue State interference. A glance at our history, taking in the establishment of our great universities and centers of learning, would convince any unbiased enquirer of the Church's noble part in bringing the benefits of education to the people. Her policy had always been that educational opportunities should depend on ability and not on birth or the possession of wealth. In holding up the ideal of human dignity, and

the duty of the State so to order its social life and institutions that personal dignity might be safeguarded, the Church had ever been to the fore. Her writers had always proclaimed the dignity of the laborer, and consequently his claim, founded on natural justice, to what, in our state of society, was called a living wage. No Socialist had ever made his claim in a stronger or more forcible manner than the great Pope Leo XIII.

## Some Books for Catholic Readers

COMPILED BY JOHN C. REVILLE, S.J.

### Sheehan, Canon Patrick A.:

The Blindness of Dr. Gray.....	Longmans,	\$1.50
Geoffrey Austin, Student.....	"	\$1.50
Glenanaar .....	"	\$1.50
Lisheen .....	"	\$1.50
Luke Delmege .....	"	\$1.50
My New Curate.....	"	\$1.50
The Triumph of Failure.....	"	\$1.50

Canon Sheehan is not only a great story-teller, he is the personal friend of his countless readers. He knows his beloved Ireland, its priests, and its people, and has pictured them with loving sympathy and insight. His books are packed with thought, with the kindest of humor, the highest ideals and the purest philosophy of life. "My New Curate" is the study of a quiet seaside Irish village from the point of view of a lovable old Irish parish priest, an easy-going scholar and saint, brimful of good resolutions to better the lot of his equally lovable and easy-going flock. "Daddy Dan," as his people lovingly nickname him, is a real addition to literature. The "New Curate," Father Letheby, a priest of the loftiest character, and his efficiency methods are drawn in fine contrast to the character and ways of his pastor. In "Geoffrey Aus-

tin" and its sequel, "The Triumph of Failure," Canon Sheehan has depicted a soul tragedy. Goeffrey suffers shipwreck of his faith and falls low indeed, but through humiliation and suffering receives strength to rise to the heights of atonement and regeneration. Some of the finest pages of Canon Sheehan are to be found in these two books. "The Triumph" was said to be the author's favorite. The volumes, however, make at times rather gloomy reading. The "Blindness of Dr. Gray," like "My New Curate," is a study of Irish ecclesiastical life. Dr. Gray, a high-minded priest, is a believer in strict justice. After one sad mistake he learns the lesson that the world is better governed by love than by law. "Glenanaar" is a study of tainted heredity in a family of informers. The "Great Liberator" is one of its prominent figures. "Lish-keen" shows us an idealistic Kerry landlord who puts into practice his ideals of social regeneration by living the life of a common laborer. The life of the Irish priest and his wonderful people are again depicted in "Luke Delmege." This novel is one of the strongest works of the author. It shows the startling capacity of the Irish race for discerning the supernatural.

### Shorthouse, Joseph H.:

John Inglesant ..... Macmillan, \$0.80

An historico-mystical biography of an adherent of Charles I., who subsequently becomes an intermediary between the Anglican and the "Romanist" parties. Charles I. and the Earl of Stratford figure in the plot. The book is not free from religious and sectarian bigotry. It has some startling and dramatic incidents, and is full of fine descriptions, among others that of the election of a Pope. The plague at Naples is also powerfully depicted.

### Sienkiewicz, Henryk:

The Deluge (2 Vols.).....	Little, Brown,	\$3.00
The Knights of the Cross.....	" "	\$1.50
On the Field of Glory.....	" "	\$1.50
Pan Michael .....	" "	\$1.50

Quo Vadis .....	"	\$1.50
Through the Desert.....	Benziger,	\$1.35
With Fire and Sword.....	"	\$1.50

Sienkiewicz is one of the world's great story-tellers, in some respects superior to Scott. In "Quo Vadis" and in the "Deluge" there are some chapters which from a Catholic point of view are obtrusively and unnecessarily suggestive and to many readers dangerous; scenes of barbarous cruelty are also needlessly described. But the lessons which come from his books are those of faith, of devotion to duty, of respect for holy things, of sacrifice and self-control. The books are manuals of patriotism. "The Knights of the Cross" describes the struggle of Poland against the Teutonic invasion in the fifteenth century; "With Fire and Sword" her fight against the rebellious Cossacks; the "Deluge," the wars against the Swedish King, Karl Gustav; "Pan Michael," her fight against the Tartars, and "On the Field of Glory," the first stages of the crusade against the Turks, under John Sobieski. These volumes form a Polish epic. They are conceived on a vast scale and have given to romance some of its finest figures among others those of Pan Zagloba, a rare combination of cowardice and heroism, a liar and as bibulous as a sponge, but the soul of honor, the staunchest of friends, a bad "mouth," but a good heart, and the sworn enemy of Tartars, Turks and traitors, a Polish Falstaff, and an improvement on the original; the incomparable swordsman, "Pan Michael," who with one thrust of his terrible rapier snuffs out the lives of Poland's enemies as easily as a sacristan snuffs out the candles on the altar, and the giant Pan Podbipienta, the stainless knight who dies under the Tartar arrows, reciting the Litany of Our Lady. The defense of Yasna Gora, the sacred shrine of Our Lady of Chenstohova, has nothing superior to it in romantic literature. Pan Kmita's struggle against his weaker self and his rise to the heights of heroism is a thrilling and ennobling story. "Quo Vadis" is a colorful picture and a dramatic presentation of Roman life and society under Nero. "Through the Desert" is the story of a Polish boy and girl kidnapped by the Mahdists.

**Skinner, Henrietta D.:**

*Espiritu Santo* ..... Harper, \$1.25

Scenes of artist life in New York. The spiritual beauty of Catholicism is well brought out.

**Smith, F. Hopkinson:**

*Colonel Carter of Cartersville*.....Houghton, \$1.50

*Felix O'Day* .....Scribner, \$1.50

*Kennedy Square* ..... " \$1.50

*Tom Grogan* .....Houghton, \$1.50

"Colonel Carter" presents us with a character-portrait of the people of the South, with an erratic and extravagant but finely fibered and noble-hearted old Yankee and his devoted servant Chad, an ex-slave. The ideal relations between master and man form a touching picture. In "Kennedy Square," aristocratic life in Maryland about three-quarters of a century ago, with Edgar Allan Poe playing a part in the story. "Tom Grogan" is the wife of a New York stevedore, who after the death of her husband continues his work. She is a rare combination of strength of purpose and character, while remaining a thoroughly delicate and tender-hearted woman. "Felix O'Day" is with "Colonel Carter" the best of the author's works. It depicts New York life and introduces a fine portrait of a priest.

**Smith, The Rev. John Talbot:**

*The Black Cardinal*.....Champlain Pub. Co., \$1.00

A dramatic and well-planned story, a great cardinal, a Bonaparte, a woman's sorrows, and the vindication of the Catholic doctrine of marriage and divorce.

**Souvestre, Emile:**

*The Attic Philosopher*.....Crowell, \$0.40

Not strictly a novel, but rather the thoughts of a humble Parisian philosopher or student of life, who prefers poverty and contentment to money and worry, lowly but generous-hearted friends to ambitious kinsfolk and who finds his happiness in doing little acts of kindness.

**Spearman, Frank H.:**

Nan of Music Mountain.....	Scribner, \$1.50
Whispering Smith .....	" \$1.50

The author is a clever, forcible and interesting writer, one of our Catholic novelists who knows American life and presents it with truth and power.

**Spillman, The Rev. Joseph:**

Cross and Chrysanthemum.....	Herder, \$1.00
Lucius Flavius .....	" \$1.50
Victim of the Seal of Confession.....	" \$1.00
The Wonderful Flower of Woxindon..	" \$1.25

Dickens and Scott were the models of this Jesuit novelist. If he does not equal them he made good use of their methods to bring home to his readers the beauty and the truth of the Catholic Church. These romances are popular and full of movement. In "The Wonderful Flower of Woxindon" we have a beautiful and dramatic tale of the days of Mary Queen of Scots. The title of the third story on the list is enough to reveal its latent possibilities.

**Stevenson, Robert Louis:**

The Black Arrow.....	Scribner, \$1.00
Kidnapped .....	" \$1.50
The Master of Ballantrae.....	" \$1.00
The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde .....	" \$1.00
Treasure Island .....	" \$1.00

Stevenson is one of the princes of romance. His tales are wholesome, and according to Professor William Lyon Phelps, a good judge, "more thrillingly adventurous than Scott's; his characters are equally interesting; his style is immeasurably superior." In him we find a "happy blending of wildly exciting incident with a technically rhetorical perfection. "Treasure Island" is a masterpiece of romance for young and old, a story about a man and a

treasure, and a mutiny, and a derelict ship, and a current, . . . and a doctor, and another doctor, and a sea-song with the chorus "Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum . . ." Pew, Black Dog and Long John Silver are monumental villains strongly individualized. "The Black Arrow" is a Yorkist tale of the Wars of the Roses, with Richard III. as one of the actors. "Kidnapped" is a rival of "Treasure Island" in its romance, stirring deeds, hair-breadth escapes, fights and wild adventures. Alan Breck is a resourceful and daring *soldado* and the fight in the round-house of the ship will satisfy any self-respecting boy. "The Master of Ballantrae" narrates the tragic downfall of a noble Scottish family during the Jacobite wars; the rivalry of two brothers; the old steward Mackellar tells the story; a thrilling midnight duel. "The Strange Case" is a study of dualism or change of personality, depicting the conflict of good and evil in man; not an immoral, but in some respects a rather depressing and repellent picture.

